1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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likely to embroil him with his fellow-clansmen. His position was never so strong that he could call on his clansmen to perform such personal services as the repair of his house or the clearing of his farm.

The position of the village-head was even more unenviable. It was his business to apportion the tax, which might be a horse or slave, or several, according to the size of the village. To obtain this he called on each householder to provide as much corn or cash as would suffice to buy the slave required. He had to arrest criminals and send them to Kauru. But apart from these imposed duties he was careful to mind his own business. Any excessive zeal would be rewarded by an arrow. The Katab was quick to seize his bow even against his nearest relatives, and it was not uncommon for a village-head to take refuge in Kauru until the anger of his fellow-villagers had subsided.

It would appear that in the early days the Aswen sub-clan was recognized as the senior Katab clan, the chief of Aswen receiving an acknowledgment of his position in the form of the forelegs of larger game killed. But in later times the sub-clan of Fakan assumed the rôle formerly held by Aswen. Fakan, however, was merely *primus inter pares*. If one sub-clan had a dispute with another the matter was referred to a disinterested group. Thus, if the Agbat had a dispute with the Aswen, the Fakan sub-clan was called in as an intermediary. If Fakan had a dispute with Nje, the Aswen clan was asked to adjudicate, and so on.

The present position is that the Katab (with the Ikulu and Kaje) are administered from Zaria by a resident district headman with the title of Katuka, who is directly responsible to the Emir of Zaria. The sub-clan and clan headman have no executive authority outside the limits of their own village-areas, but they combine to form a native court which sits monthly at each of the sub-clan headquarters, the chief of the sub-clan Aswen being at the moment president of the court. The sub-clan and elders also, in accordance with native custom, form a deliberative assembly, and I witnessed a meeting of this assembly which had been convened to discuss certain matters referred to them by the district headman. The Magajin Mugu of the Aswen sub-clan spoke first, and was followed in turn by the other sub-clan headmen. As each finished speaking the most senior men

195 311 241 612 423 20. An explanation of this state of affairs is to be found in the historical background. In pre-British times when the Kagoro lived in the hills and came down to farm the plains it was the customary practice for a kindred or even a family group to farm lands in several widely dispersed areas and not in one compact block. The idea was that all the family eggs should not be in the same basket. If one particular area happened to be raided by the Fulani then, though the kindred or family might lose the produce of one particular farm, they would have other farms in other areas to fall back on; whereas had they been farming in only one place and in one compact block they would have lost everything they had. Consequently when the British rule brought peace and security the kindreds did not come down from the hills to settle in single compact blocks but came down to their split up and dispersed farms over the whole of the area. Whether or not the concept of a kindred holding of the land may have existed in the past it is certain that it does not exist now. It would have been undermined from the very start.

Breakdown to individual tenure.

423 311 596 888 21. The breakdown has gone much farther than the kindred. Whereas up to about twenty years ago it could truthfully have been said that it was the exception to the rule to find a man and his immediate family living and farming on his own, it is now the exception to the rule to find an extended family or family group living and farming together. In two cases that were investigated in the field it was found that the " family " lands had been divided up while the father was still alive. In the one case the father was too old to farm and in the second had suffered an injury some ten years ago which had prevented him from carrying on strenuous farming. In both cases the father was relatively hale and hearty and quite alert of mind. Nevertheless they were both prepared, since they could take no active part in the farming of the land themselves, to wash their hands of the matter and give their adult children their portion of the family lands. The only say they retained in the matter was in respect of the minor's portion and the division of the fallow lands. Fallow would not be divided up until it was actually required when as much as was required would be allotted to the son and this would then come under his control. Discussion with responsible opinion confirmed that this was a general practice and was quite common and widespread.

651 596 162 476 22. An interesting check on the above is available from the tax lists. These lists show, together with the name of each 'householder', the name of each adult tax payer living in the compound. It was confirmed by the District Head and Elders that where in the list a number of adult males were listed

together in one household then it was probable that they were farming their lands together though this was not an infallible sequitur. Where, however, a man was listed as a separate householder it could be categorically stated that in that case the family lands had been divided and the householder was living and farming on his own with no other relations than his children. The tax lists for 1947 shew that in no case were more than six adult males living and farming together. One or two cases were found of six adult males farming together; a small number of cases of four or five; but the vast majority of compounds consisted of no more than one, two or three adult males. The average number of adult males per compound is 1.6 and the average number of persons eight.

23. Unfortunately the tax lists for the pre-war years have all been destroyed and an interesting comparison has been lost. A few of the tax sheets for 1939 were found and the same average number of 1.6 males per compound was found shewing that the breakdown has existed for a number of years. It is universal throughout the district. Discussion with the Elders confirmed this situation.

24. The extent of the breakdown appears to be greater here than in the adjoining Katab district of the Emirate. The reasons for it lie in the circumstances set out in paragraph 20 above, *i.e.*, the kindred holding concept was undermined from the very start owing to the fragmentation of the kindred lands. Another contributory factor is that the advent of peace and security has removed the sanctions which formerly made group or communal living if not absolutely necessary then advisable in the extreme. With the perpetual threat of a Fulani raid it would have needed a major family convulsion to cause a man to leave the security and mutual protection afforded by communal living. Newadays the merest family tiff will result in the individual demanding his portion of the family lands and going off to farm on his own.

25. It cannot be said, at the moment, that the breakdown has occasioned any grave *local* social problem. The lands that were so precariously available to the fathers and grandfathers of the present generation were more than ample for their greatest needs had they been allowed to farm with security. These lands have been divided and sub-divided; but there still remains to the present day users a sufficiency for their needs and something to spare. It is true that the various fields are widely scattered. But, points out the Elder, this fragmentation is something that the Kagoro has always been accustomed to and presents no novel feature

[p.6]